

4A Sounds interesting

1 VOCABULARY & WRITING

sounds and the human voice

- a Try to sit for one minute in complete silence, listening carefully. Write down everything you hear. Then compare with a partner. Did you hear the same things?
- b ➤ p.164 Vocabulary Bank *Sounds and the human voice*.
- c 225 Listen to the sounds and make a note of what they are. Then write three paragraphs based on the sounds. Begin your paragraphs as follows:
- 1 It was 12.30 at night and Mike had just fallen asleep...
 - 2 Amanda was walking down Park Street...
 - 3 It was a cold winter night...

2 PRONUNCIATION consonant clusters



Fine-tuning your pronunciation: consonant clusters

Combinations of two or three consonant sounds, e.g. **clothes**, **spring**, can be difficult to pronounce, especially if the combination of sounds is not common in your language.

Three-consonant clusters at the beginning of words always begin with s, e.g. **scream**.

Three-consonant clusters at the end of words are often either plurals (**months**), third person singular verbs (**wants**), or regular past tenses (**asked**).

- a 226 Listen to the words below. Then practise saying them.

At the beginning of a word

two sounds

click
slam
crash
slurp
drip
snore
stammer

three sounds

screech
scream
splash

At the end of a word

two sounds

shouts
sniffs
yelled
hummed

three sounds

crunched
mumble
crisps
rattled

- b 227 Listen and repeat the sentences.

- 1 She **screamed** when her **friend** **splashed** her in the **swimming pool**.
- 2 The **brakes** **screeched** and then there was a **tremendous crash**.
- 3 I hate the **crunching** of someone eating **crisps**.

- c Write three sentences of your own, using two words from a in each sentence. Give them to your partner to say.

3 READING

- a Read the headline and the introduction to the article on page 35. With a partner, say how you think the following aspects of Vicky's life have been affected by her phobia.

- university studies
- relationships
- work
- where she lives

- b Read the article and check.

- c What is each paragraph about? With a partner, match paragraphs 1–7 to summaries A–H. There is one summary that you don't need.

- A ☐ how her phobia caused her to underachieve
- B ☐ the physical effects of her phobia
- C ☐ what she considers to be the most damaging effect of her phobia
- D ☐ the effect of her phobia on where she works and lives
- E ☐ her eventual diagnosis
- F ☐ how therapy has helped her
- G ☐ her ambivalent attitude to sounds
- H ☐ how her problems originated

LEXIS IN CONTEXT

- d Look at the **highlighted** adverbs and adverbial phrases and work out the meaning of any that you don't know. Check with your dictionary.
- e How sympathetic are you to Vicky's phobia? Do you know anyone with a phobia that seriously affects their life?



Life & style Experience

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I have a phobia of sound

For the last 30 years, I have had violent physical reactions to certain noises. Everyday sounds, like someone chewing or a pen being clicked, make me want to hide, scream, and put my fingers in my ears.

- 1 I feel unreasonable complaining to people about these **seemingly** harmless sounds, but for me they are threatening. My body reacts in the same way as it would under attack: I am flooded with adrenaline. It is as if I were in the same room as a huge, fierce dog. I am unable to focus on anything but my terror. I often have to hang up on phone calls **abruptly**, leave my seat and walk around the room, trying to block out the noise.
- 2 My phobia began when I was 19 and started work in a busy office. The noise of a colleague next to me who chewed gum **incessantly** became unbearable. My ears tuned in to every sound until they filled my head, and I couldn't focus on my work. This cacophony was added to by another colleague who **continually** whistled, until I was forced to leave.
- 3 The path of my life has been dictated by the sounds around me. I have changed jobs numerous times, searching for the perfect quiet office. I have moved house, too, away from loud music or arguing neighbours. **Strangely**, I'd love to live near a motorway: the constant hum of traffic would be soothing to me.
- 4 My phobia has affected my ability to get on in life. During my final examinations at university, I was doing really well, translating Greek **with ease**, until the scratching of a pen against paper filtered into my consciousness, bringing me to a halt. During another exam, a nearby pub had a delivery and the sound of barrels being rolled along by whistling delivery men destroyed any chance of concentration. I discovered afterwards that I was two marks off a first.
- 5 My biggest regret is that it has prevented me from having a long-term relationship and children. The longest I have been with someone is two years, until the sound of their eating, breathing, just existing **in proximity** to me became intolerable. I would sneak off to the spare room in the night to try to get some sleep, but it would be interpreted as a rejection of them. It's hard to stay with someone who doesn't want to eat or sleep with you. I haven't ruled out love yet, though. I'm sure there is someone who could accept my limitations.
- 6 It took me 30 years to realize that what I have has a name: misophonia, or hatred of sound. When I recently discovered a support forum dedicated to it, I cried for two hours. I felt so relieved to know that other people – 900 of them on this one site – felt like I did. I wasn't the only one.
- 7 It also gave me perspective. Some sufferers wish they were deaf, but I don't. I love many, many sounds: the sea, wind in the trees, music, the human voice. Time and experience have taught me that being able to hear is a beautiful thing, too important to sacrifice. I would never wish that away.

By Vicky Rhodes in The Guardian

Glossary
a first the top qualification in UK university degrees

4 LISTENING & SPEAKING

- a 28 Listen to five people talking about noises they don't like.
- 1 What noise does each person describe?
 - 2 How much do you think it affects their daily life?
- b Listen again. Who...?
- 1 ☐ feels that a sound represents a negative emotion
 - 2 ☐ wishes he'd / she'd complained about a noise sooner
 - 3 ☐ is annoyed because he's / she's powerless to stop a sound
 - 4 ☐ has to make a sound stop before he / she can relax
 - 5 ☐ describes sounds that other people clearly like
- c Talk to a partner.

• Are there any noises that really annoy you?

Are you affected by them in your daily life?

Is there anything you can do to avoid or stop them?

• Are there any sounds that you really love or that make you feel good?

• Do you prefer music or silence in these situations? Why?

- in bars and restaurants
- in a supermarket
- in a gym
- when a plane is taking off or landing
- when you're put on hold on the phone

If you prefer music, what kind?

1 SOUNDS

- a 22) All the words in the list can be both nouns and regular verbs. Many of them are onomatopoeic (they sound like the sound they describe). Listen to the sounds and the words.

bang /bæŋ/ buzz /bʌz/ click /kɪk/ crash /kræʃ/ creak /kriːk/
crunch /krʌntʃ/ drip /drɪp/ hiss /hɪs/ hoot /huːt/ hum /hʌm/
rattle /rætl/ roar /rɔː/ screech /skriːtʃ/ slam /slæm/
slurp /slɜːp/ sniff /snɪf/ snore /snɔː/ splash /splæʃ/
tap /tæp/ tick /tɪk/ whistle /wɪsl/

- b Now complete the **Sounds** column with the words in the list.

- | | Sounds |
|--|--------|
| 1 This clock has a very loud <input type="text"/> . | tick |
| 2 Don't <input type="text"/> ! Get a tissue and blow your nose. | |
| 3 To get the new software, just <input type="text"/> on the 'download' icon. | |
| 4 There was a <input type="text"/> as he jumped into the swimming pool. | |
| 5 Did you hear that <input type="text"/> ? It sounded like a gun. | |
| 6 I heard a floorboard <input type="text"/> and I knew somebody had come into the room. | |
| 7 I could hear the <input type="text"/> of a fly, but I couldn't see it anywhere. | |
| 8 I hate people who <input type="text"/> at me when I slow down at an amber light. | |
| 9 When I'm nervous, I often <input type="text"/> my fingers on the table. | |
| 10 Don't <input type="text"/> your soup! Eat it quietly. | |
| 11 The snake reared its head and gave an angry <input type="text"/> . | |
| 12 Please turn the tap off properly, otherwise it'll <input type="text"/> . | |
| 13 We could hear the <input type="text"/> of the crowd in the football stadium from our hotel. | |
| 14 Some of the players carried on playing because they hadn't heard the <input type="text"/> . | |
| 15 I don't remember the words of the song, but I can <input type="text"/> the tune. | |
| 16 Please don't <input type="text"/> the door. Close it gently. | |
| 17 I heard the <input type="text"/> of their feet walking through the crisp snow. | |
| 18 I can't share a room with you if you <input type="text"/> - I won't be able to sleep. | |
| 19 Every time a bus or lorry goes by, the windows <input type="text"/> . | |
| 20 I heard the <input type="text"/> of brakes as the driver tried to stop and then a loud <input type="text"/> . | |

- c 23) Listen and check.

2 THE HUMAN VOICE

- a Match the verbs and definitions.

giggle /'gɪɡl/ groan /grəʊn/ mumble /'mʌmbəl/
scream /skriːm/ sigh /saɪ/ sob /sɒb/
stammer /'stæmə/ whisper /'wɪspə/ yell /jel/

- 1 scream to make a loud, high cry because you are hurt, frightened, or excited
- 2 (at sb) to shout loudly, e.g. because you are angry
- 3 (at sth) to laugh in a silly way
- 4 (to sb) to speak very quietly, so that other people can't hear what you're saying
- 5 to speak or say sth in a quiet voice in a way that is not clear
- 6 to make a long deep sound because you are in pain or annoyed
- 7 (or stutter) to speak with difficulty, often repeating sounds or words
- 8 to cry noisily, taking sudden sharp breaths
- 9 to take in and then let out a long deep breath, e.g. to show that you are disappointed or tired

- b 24) Listen and check.

- c Answer the questions using one of the verbs in a.

What do people do...?

- when they are nervous
- when they are terrified
- when they lose their temper
- when they are not supposed to be making any noise
- when they are amused or embarrassed
- when they speak without opening their mouth enough
- when they are relieved
- when their team misses a penalty
- when they are very unhappy about something

activation Choose five sounds from 1 and two verbs from 2. Make the sounds for your partner to identify.

◀ p.34

